

Message Text

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TO USLO PEKING IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT NEVILLE MAXWELL FRONT PAGE BYLINER, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25, WASHINGTON POST, HEADLINED "U.S. SAID TO WARN CHINA ON SOVIETS; PEKING SAYS IT RECEIVED THREE ALERTS ON BORDER THREATS." STORY IS DATE-LINED PEKING.

2. THREE TIMES THIS YEAR, CHINA HAS RECEIVED WARNINGS FROM A THIRD POWER THAT AN ATTACK BY THE SOVIET UNION APPEARED

IMMINENT. THE SOURCE OF THE WARNINGS HAS NOT BEEN SPECIFIED, BUT IT IS CLEARLY IMPLIED THAT THEY CAME FROM THE UNITED STATES AND DREW ON SATELLITE INTELLIGENCE.

3. ALLUSION TO THE WARNINGS WAS FIRST REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN MADE BY TENG HSIAO-PING, A VICE PREMIER, IN RECENT TALKS WITH FOREIGN VISITORS. THAT SUCH WARNINGS WERE RECEIVED IN APRIL, JUNE AND MID-AUGUST WAS CONFIRMED TO THIS WRITER BY UNCLASSIFIED

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CHINESE SOURCES HERE.

4. PRECAUTIONARY MILITARY MEASURES WERE SAID TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN BY CHINA AS A MATTER OF COURSE. BUT THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THE WARNINGS HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED HERE IS THE CHINESE CONFIDENCE, STRONGLY EXPRESSED, THAT FOR THE PRESENT CHINA

STANDS IN LITTLE IMMEDIATE DANGER OF A SOVIET ATTACK.

5. THE SOVIET TROOP CONCENTRATIONS AND MANEUVERS ON CHINA'S BORDERS, WHICH PRESUMABLY INSPIRED THE WARNINGS, ARE DESCRIBED BY THE CHINESE AS A FEINT, DISGUIISING THE REAL THREAT FROM THE SOVIET UNION, WHICH CHINESE SAY IS AGAINST WESTERN EUROPE.

6. (NO VERIFICATION OF THE REPORT COULD BE OBTAINED FROM AMERICAN SOURCES PRESENT IN WASHINGTON OVER THE WEEKEND. SEVERAL SOURCES IN WASHINGTON SUGGESTED THAT THE CHINESE MAY HAVE PUT OUT THE REPORT IN AN EFFORT TO AGGRAVATE SOVIET RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES.

7. (SEVERAL ADMINISTRATIVE SOURCES SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO INFORMATION OF A BUILDUP OF SOVIET FORCES ALONG THE CHINESE BORDER IN RECENT MONTHS.)

8. OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE CHINESE ATTITUDE TO THE THREAT IMPLICIT IN THE SOVIET BUILDUP ON THEIR BORDERS, ESPECIALLY IN THE NORTHEAST, HAS CHANGED MARKEDLY. THE HIGH PITCH OF PREPARATION TO RESIST ATTACK, DEMONSTRATED IN THE ELABORATE AND EXTENSIVE AIR-RAID SHELTERS TUNNELED BENEATH CITIES ALL OVER CHINA, HAS LEVELED OFF, SUGGESTING THAT THE CHINESE NOW BELIEVE THAT THEIR DEFENSES ARE SUFFICIENT.

9. PREVIOUS CHINESE ALLUSIONS TO THE SOVIET BORDER DEPLOYMENTS EMPHASIZED THEIR STRENGTH, WHICH THE CHINESE PUT AT A MILLION TROOPS. BUT NOW, THE CHINESE STRESS THE INADEQUACY OF SUCH A FORCE FOR AGGRESSION AGAINST CHINA AND ITS MILITANT 800 MILLION PEOPLE.

10. APPRECIATION OF THE STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS FOR THE
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SOVIET UNION OF CHINA'S OWN DETENTE WITH THE UNITED STATES MAY BE ONE FACTOR IN PEKING'S NEW CONFIDENCE. BUT CHINESE DEFENSE PLANNING COULD HARDLY RELY ON AN EARLY-WARNING SYSTEM BASED ON AMERICAN SATELLITE SURVEILLANCE OF THE SINO-SOVIET BORDER REGIONS. THE REAL ROOT OF THE NEW CONFIDENCE HERE, IF IT IS AS GENUINE AS IT APPEARS, IS MORE LIKELY TO LIE IN A BELIEF THAT CHINA IS ALREADY STRONG ENOUGH TO DETER SOVIET ATTACK.

11. WESTERN DIPLOMATS HERE PROFESS TO HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY WARNING HAVING BEEN GIVEN, OR OF ANY UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND PEKING TO PROVIDE FOR SUCH WARNINGS. BUT THOSE ANALYSTS WHO ARE PREPARED TO ASSUME NOW

THAT SUCH AN UNDERSTANDING DOES EXIST TRACE ITS ORIGINS TO 1969. IN THAT YEAR THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION IS SAID TO HAVE RECEIVED SOUNDINGS FROM THE SOVIET UNION, SEEKING TO ASCERTAIN WHAT AMERICAN REACTION IS REPORTED TO HAVE AMOUNTED TO AN EMPHATIC WARNING AGAINST ANY SUCH SOVIET ACTION.

12. IF WASHINGTON JUDGES A SINO-SOVIET WAR TO BE AGAINST AMERICAN NATIONAL INTEREST, THEN IT WOULD BE A LOGICAL STEP TO DEPRIVE THE SOVIET UNION OF THE ADVANTAGES OF TACTICAL SURPRISE BY WARNING CHINA OF IMPENDING ATTACK. WASHINGTON, IN THIS INTERPRETATION, WOULD HAVE HAD TO INFORM MOSCOW THAT ANY EVIDENCE OF AGGRESSIVE MOVES AGAINST CHINA WOULD BE REPORTED TO PEKING.

13. WHILE THE CHINESE SAY THEY BELIEVE THAT THE DANGER OF A SOVIET ATTACK HAS DIMINISHED FOR THE TIME BEING, THEY MAINTAIN THAT WHAT THEY SEE AS THE INHERENT ANTAGONISM OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT TOWARD CHINA WILL CONTINUE. THE IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MOSCOW AND PEKING ARE HELD TO BE IRRECONCILABLE. THE CHINESE ASSERT THAT THEY ARE READY TO NORMALIZE STATE RELATIONS, BUT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT THEY WILL COMPROMISE IN ORDER TO DO SO.

14. ANALYSES OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY AS HYPOCRITICAL AND SELF-SERVING, AND DESCRIPTIONS OF SOVIET SOCIETY AS A NEO-CAPITALIST SYSTEM OPERATED BY THE NEW, "REVISIONIST" RUL-
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ING CLASS FOR ITS OWN BENEFIT CONTINUE TO BE PUBLISHED HERE, AND ARE AS UNSPARING AND CONDEMNING AS EVER.

15. THE NEGOTIATIONS ON THE SINO-SOVIET BOUNDARY ARE STILL DEADLOCKED.

16. THE SUPPOSITION THAT CHINA RECENTLY MADE AN OVERTURE TO THE SOVIET UNION BY PROPOSING A NONAGGRESSION TREATY IS UNFOUNDED, AND APPEARS TO BE BASED UPON A MISREADING OF THE RELEVANT TEXT.

17. PEKING'S CUSTOMARY GREETINGS TO MOSCOW ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION REITERATED THE VIEW THAT DIFFERENCES OF PRINCIPLE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES SHOULD NOT PREVENT NORMALIZATION OF STATE RELATIONS, AND

THAT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF THE BOUNDARY DISPUTE WOULD BE CONDUCIVE TO "FRIENDLY AND GOOD-NEIGHBORLY RELATIONS."

18. THE MESSAGE CONTINUED: "TO THIS END, IT IS NECESSARY FIRST OF ALL TO SIGN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE UNDERSTANDING

REACHED BETWEEN THE PREMIERS OF CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION IN SEPTEMBER 1969, AN AGREEMENT WHICH INCLUDES MUTUAL NONAGGRESSION AND NON-USE OF FORCE AGAINST EACH OTHER, ON THE MAINTENANCE OF THE STATUS QUO ON THE BORDER, PREVENTION OF ARMED CONFLICT AND DISENGAGEMENT OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE TWO SIDES IN THE AREAS OF DISPUTE, AND THEN PROCEED TO SETTLE THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS THE ENTIRE BOUNDARY QUESTION."

19. SINCE 1969, WHEN THE BORDER DISPUTE BROKE INTO ARMED CONFLICT ON THE USSURI RIVER IN CHINA'S NORTHEAST, THE CHINESE HAVE INSISTED THAT THE BOUNDARIES BE DEFUSED BEFORE NEGOTIATIONS OPEN AGAIN ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE DISPUTE.

20. ACCORDING TO THE CHINESE, THE DRAFT AGREEMENT THEY PUT FORWARD TO THAT END WHEN CHOU EN-LAI AND ALEXEI KOSYGIN MET AT PEKING AIRPORT IN SEPTEMBER 1969 INCLUDED A DISAVOWAL OF THE USE OF ARMED FORCE, SPECIFICALLY IN-
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CLUDING THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND MISSILES.

21. THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT, WHILE REJECTING THE CHINESE PACKAGE APPROACH, LATER EXTRACTED FROM IT THE DISAVOWAL OF THE USE OF ARMED FORCE, AND PUT THAT FORWARD SEPARATELY. THAT IS, THE SOVIETS PROPOSED A NONAGGRESSION PACT WHICH WOULD NOT BE TIED IN ANY WAY TO DISENGAGEMENT OR TO ANY OTHER PRACTICAL MEASURE TO AVERT ARMED CONFLICT ON THE BORDERS.

22. THE CHINESE REJECTED THAT, INSISTING THAT THEIR PACKAGE APPROACH, INVOLVING ACTIONS AS WELL AS WORDS, WAS THE ONLY MEANINGFUL ONE. AND RECENTLY, SOVIET SPOKESMEN HAVE BEEN EMPHASIZING THE CHARGE THAT CHINA, WHILE COMPLAINING OF SOVIET MILITARY PRESSURE, HAS REFUSED TO CONCLUDE A NONAGGRESSION PACT.

23. IN THAT CONTEXT, IT CAN BE SEEN THAT ALL PEKING DID IN THE RECENT ANNIVERSARY GREETING MESSAGE TO MOSCOW WAS TO RESTATE, WITH WHAT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN AN ATTEMPT AT MAXIMUM CLARITY, THE POSITION CHINA HAS TAKEN SINCE 1969.

THAT AMOUNTED TO A REBUTTAL OF THE SOVIET CHARGE THAT CHINA WAS REFUSING TO CONCLUDE A NONAGGRESSION TREATY.

24. IT HAS BEEN NOTED HERE THAT THAT PASSAGE OF THE GREETING MESSAGE WAS DELETED FROM THE VERSION PUBLISHED BY THE SOVIET UNION. THOSE WHO REPORTED FROM MOSCOW THAT CHINA

HAD MADE A CONCESSION APPARENTLY DID NOT HAVE A TEXT OF THE CHINESE MESSAGE. AND THE TEXT DID NOT BECOME AVAILABLE IN PEKING UNTIL AFTER SOME DELAY, SO CORRESPONDENTS HERE WERE NOT INITIALLY IN A POSITION TO CORRECT THE MOSCOW REPORTS. THE RESULT WAS A SUDDEN BALLOONING OF SPECULATION ABOUT A NONEVENT -- "PEKING'S PEACE PROPOSAL."

25. ALL THE DIRECT EVIDENCE AVAILABLE HERE INDICATES THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN PEKING'S APPROACH TO THE BOUNDARY QUESTION, OR, BASICALLY, TO RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE SOVIET UNION.

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26. IT HAS RECENTLY BEEN STATED AGAIN THAT IN DUE COURSE THE CREW OF THE SOVIET HELICOPTER THAT WENT DOWN IN CHINESE TERRITORY EARLIER IN THE YEAR WILL BE TRIED FOR THEIR OFFENSES AGAINST CHINESE LAW. ONE WESTERN DIPLOMAT SAID THAT THE CONSENSUS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS HERE IS THAT "THE CHINESE HAVE GOT THEM COLD." THAT IS, THAT THE EVIDENCE THAT THE HELICOPTER WAS ON SOME FORM OF ESPIONAGE TASK, NOT ON A MISSION OF RESCUE, IS IRREFUTABLE. (END TEXT) INGERSOLL

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